Dear

Leading off our second newsletter is a report on our first official AGM, held on Monday Sept. 5th at the Moorabbin Town Hall. The meeting was well-attended with over 40 members turning up to elect your first committee. Guest of honour at the function was well-known South Australian collector Gordon Wall, who, by a fortunate stroke of luck, happened to be in Melbourne on business on that day. Certainly I know that a lot of Melbourne collectors were glad to see Gordon again, Gordon being a former resident here many years ago, and I'm sure that he felt the same! It was great to see you, Gordon.

For the record , the Official Committee of the Victorian Bing Crosby Society is as follows: President - Bob Machliss
Vice President - Ken Orrin
Treasurer -Thelma Wood
Secretary - Audrey Evans
Other committee members - Jim McManus
- Les Saynor
- Adrian Fowler.
- Bill Bennett

Whilst speaking of the meeting, I must again at this stage express the group's thanks to Bill Weeden Snr, President of the Sinatra Society of Australia. Bill was a great help in guiding us around the pitfalls encountered in forming a new society, and of course, kindly volunteered to chair our AGM until the position of President was officially taken care of. If you would like any information on the Sinatra Society, write to: The Secretary, Sinatra Society of Australia, P.O. Box 123, Clayton 3168.

Official Constitution The following constitution for the Victorian Bing Crosby Society was officially adopted at the AGM by a unanimous show of hands.

a) That Bing Crosby be invited to become an honorary life member of the Society.

b) That the objectives of the Society are:

i) To increase public awareness and understanding of the contribution of Bing Crosby to popular music.

ii) To provide the opportunity for collectors and admirers of Bing Crosby to meet at regular intervals for the purpose of discussion and mutual enjoyment of the works of the artist.

c) That the Constitution of the Society shall be:

i) That a society is hereby constituted and shall be known as THE VICTORIAN BING CROSBY SOCIETY

ii) That the executive shall consist of: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and a committee of four (4). ALL to be duly elected into office at the Annual General Meeting.

iii) The Society shall be under the management and control of the Executive Committee.

iv) Duties of the Executive Committee shall be (a) To organize and publicise meetings. (b) To meet on a regular basis to discuss matters concerning the society. (c) To deal with any other matters members may deem fit.

v) The Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held in the month of September each year, when a report and balance sheet showing receipts and expenditure shall be presented to members, and the election of office-bearers for the ensuing 12 months take place. Notice of intententions to proposed changes in the Constitution must be in the hands of the Secretary at least (7) days prior to the Annual Meeting.

vi) The Financial Year shall be from the period 1st August to 31st July. Annual Subscription shall be deemed by the Annual General Meeting. The rates in force at the time of joining/renewal shall entitle a subscriber to 12 months membership in the Society.

On reading back the previous page, I see that I have neglected to include the addresses and phone numbers of your committee. These are as follows: Bob Machliss, 10 Devon St, Caulfield 3161 523 9263. Ken Orrin, 43 Wingrove St, Cheltenham 95 4483. Thelma Wood, 47 Wingrove St, Cheltenham 3192 95 9846. Audrey Evans, 15/69 Carroll Cresc. Glen Iris 3146 690 1699 (bus.). Jim McManus, 350 Centre Road, Bentleigh 3204. 97 1050 (bus.). Les Saynor, 2/15 Holyrod St, Hampton 3188. 598 9645. Adrian Fowler, 38 Wanda Rd, Nth. Caulfield 3161 509 5137. Bill Bennett, 61 Newhaven Rd, E. Burwood 3151. 232 6287 (after 5.00)

In due course, we will issue a complete membership list to all members so that you find out who your 'Crosby' neighbours are!

SPEAKING OF ADDRESSES...

Speaking of addresses, we now have an official P.O. Box number. Could you please make a note of it for all correspondence: The Victorian Bing Crosby Society, P.O. Box 422, South Melbourne 3205.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Included with this newsletter is our first official membership application form. Could you please fill out all the details and send it back to us. (Or bring it along to our next meeting, details of which follow shortly.) If you have already paid your membership fee, could you please note the date somewhere on the form. You are considered a financial meber of the society from this date forward.

If you require extra forms for friends, etc, please let us know.

OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will take place on Sunday November 13th at 1.30 p.m. at our new venue: The Collingwood Educational Centre, McCutcheon Way, Collingwood. The centre is an enormous place. The best way to find our meeting meeting hall is to park in McCutcheon Way and walk past the gym,& thru the glass doors.

This new venue was chosen after a number of halls were checked and rejected for various reasons. What immediately convinced us that the Collingwood Centre was ideal for us was 1, the facilities, 2, the location and 3, the cost!

The facilities are, to use the only suitable word, magnificent! We have at our resources a large theaterette capable of seating close to 300 people, no less than two 16mm projectors, a small cafeteria at which members may purchase tea, coffee, etc at interval, and literally everything else we need for successful meetings.

The location is suitable because it is more of less midway for members coming from both sides of Melbourne and that is the fairest arrangment we could make.

The cost, and this made the whole thing irresistable, is.... $10.11 for the entire afternoon.

THE PROGRAMME

I think you will enjoy the film programme that we have lined up for you. The first half consists of four short films: 1) An episode from a TV series of the early 1960's entitled "Hollywood and the Stars!" and covering Bing's film career. 2) Another of Bing's 1931 Mack Sennett comedies, this time "Crooner's Holiday", 3) A rare film of the 1942 Crosby Pro/Am Golf Tournament entitled "Don't Hook Now" in which Bing sings a song he didn't get round to recording until about 15 years later; "Tomorrow's my lucky day", and 4) A ten minute clip from the spectacular 1930 colour movie featuring the Paul Whiteman Orchestra: "King of Jazz". In this clip we see Bing with the RhythmBoys in a song called "A Bench in the Park". This last itemshould be a beaut! But the best is yet to come. After interval, we'll be screening the rarelyseen "ROAD TO RIO" which from memory has only been shown on TV once, and many many years ago at that!

So all in all, it should be a great afternoon. Do make every effort to attend and of course, bring along as many friends as you like. The more new members we can get, the better.

FROM THE PAST...

We're not the only people to dig out old Crosby movies from the past. Recently, the Museum of Modern Art in New York ran a showing of a 1935 short entitled "Star Night at The Coconut Grove" which was turned out by MGM. The film featured Bing amongst its guest stars and we are indebted to Roger Symons who found the following article concering the showing of the short. I hope that you enjoy reading it.

STAR NIGHT AT THE COCONUT GROVE (MGM 1935)

Produced by Louis Lewyn, photographed in Technicolor by Ray Rennahan and William V. Skall. This eye-popping Technicolor two-reeler is based on a variety evening at the famous Hollywood nightclub, where Leo Carillo hosts the entertainment and picks out celebrities in the audience including Gary Cooper, Richard Cromwell, Jack Oakie, Mary Brian, Arline Judge, El Brendel, and an odd couple if ever there was one, Sir Guy Standing and Toby Wing! Entertainment includes a number by Ted Fio Rito and his Orchestra, a special vocal of "She's way up Thar" by Candy Candido, and a fashion show featuring some dazzling young beauties (including Ann Sheridan) modeling clothes of various eras from Cleopatra's time to the Gay 90's. In the midst of the festivities, Carrillo suddenly turns serious and recites a poem by Don Blanding which we can't resist reprinting here (to be read with great emphasis): Hollywood, Hollywood...

Fabulous Hollywood
Celluloid Babylon
Glorious glamorous...(THERE'S MORE IN A SIMILIAR VEIN, BUT I DON'T THINK IT'S WORTH TAKING UP THE SPACE. YOU GET THE IDEA ANYWAY! B. M.)

Another song number with a Hawaiian theme cues a visualization of hula girls paying special homage to their native chieftan - Lloyd Hamilton. Then Mary Pickford and Johnny Mack Brown (who's sitting with his wife at the same table) exchange some banter over their recent radio performance of Coquette, leading into an introduction of radio star Number One, Bing Crosby, who sings "With Every Breath I Take" introduced in HERE IS MY HEART.

The fascination of a short such as this, besides the discovery of new screen credits for people like Crosby and young Ann Sheridan, is just how it was put together. Producer Lewyn apparently had the ability to persuade performers from all studios to appear in his shorts (he had previously done the VOICE OF HOLLYWOOD series for Tiffany, HOLLYWOOD ON PARADE for Paramount, and the HOLLYWOOD GADABOUT for Republic), and must have been equally adept at securing clearances from the studios, since Bing's song from a Paramount feature, and Candido's was sung in Fox's STAND UP AND CHEER. Lewyn also must have had an affinity for the people he worked with, bringing an ageing Lloyd Hamilton out of semi-retirement to appear in one amusing (and un-strenuous) sequence. Seeing a film like STAR NIGHT AT THE COCONUT GROVE only whets one's appetite to see every other "all-star" short made at Metro - especially those in glorious Technicolor. (End of article)

Thanks Roger, for finding that article for us. I wonder if a copy of that film will ever find its way to one of our meetings. If you have anything interesting about Bing that you think might be worth featuring in a future newsletter, why don't you send it to me. Things like this make a nice break from our straight news.

CASSETTE LIBRARY

The first batch of cassettes in our new cassette library is finally ready. There are 12 C-90 cassettes available of Bing's commercial records ranging from his first in 1926 to "Old Folks", recorded in October 1938. Over the next few months, we'll be adding more and more cassettes until we have Bing's entire commercial output covered up to whatever his latest issue is. Also available are 5 C-90 cassettes covering the actual soundtrack versions of songs from Bing's movies. At the end of this newsletter, you'll find a sheet giving all details of how you can borrow cassettes from the library.

BING ON TV

I received a friendly letter from Gary Fenton, Program Manager of HSV 7 a few days ago with good news of a couple of TV specials starring Bing which they

hope to feature before Christmas. (The preceding was written just before the tragic news which reached us at the weekend. One of the specials is the one aired tomorrow night (Tuesday 17th) commemorating Bing's 50th anniversary in Show Business. By the time you receive this, the show will have been telecast.) The other special is Bing's last Christmas show, taped a couple of months ago in London. Kathryn Crosby has stated that she wants the show to be telecast, that it is one of the best that Bing has ever done.

LIKE LOOSING A CLOSE FRIEND

I don't think that any words can sum up what Bing meant to us all. To me personally, it was like loosing a close friend... one I had grown up with all my life. When any great entertainer dies, many people use the word "irreplacible" to describe him. In Bing's case, I feel that this word is hardly adequate. The coverage given by the various media on Bing's death gives some indication of the feeling still held by virtually everyone towards Bing. The two inch headlines in the Herald on Saturday show that Bing's passing was regarded by them as news of the most major importance. I don't think I can remember seeing headlines of that size for many many years. Even though Bing had really been out of the limelight since the 1960's he was obviously very current in people's minds.

THE SOCIETY WILL CONTINUE

I suppose that one of the questions I have been asked most in the last couple of days is "Will the Victorian Bing Crosby Society continue?" The answer to this is a resounding YES! Obviously, we will require a change to our constitution printed on Page 1 of this newsletter. Possibly, we can take care of that one at our meeting on November 13th which will go ahead as scheduled.

BING'S LAST RECORDS

There are at least two and possibly three more LP's we can look forward to of new material by Bing. The first of these "Beautiful Memories" was issued in England just a few weeks ago. This is made up of material Bing recorded in London late last year. I believe that there are sufficient songs remaining for a second LP. In addition to this, Bing had only recently recorded songs for another LP which I imagine will be issued shortly too. It will be hard to imagine though, in the future, that there will be no more new recordings from Bing. In the fifty-one years from 1926 to the present day, there was never a year when didn't enter a recording studio at least once. Thank goodness he has left a legacy of close to 2,000 tracks behind.

WHAT IS THERE LEFT TO SAY...

There is so much we could say about Bing ... his songs... his life... his films... how his career has in some way touched us all. For now, I will have to stop. To Bing Crosby... for a lifetime of enjoyment given to others... our deep and lasting thanks.

Bob Machliss

On the next edition of the Crosby Collector on 3CR at 9.00 pm Sunday November 6th, we'll be taking a look at Bing at his most relaxed and spontaneous with examples from his radio series for Philco. Memories of Bing as we all like to remember him.